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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
War Food Administration
Washington 25, D. C.

January 17, 1944

Report on Frozen and Dried Egg Meeting

Purchase programs under which approximately 260 million pounds of dried whole eggs will be bought for war requirements in 1944 were discussed at a meeting in Washington, D. C., January 7, by the Frozen and Dried Egg Industry Advisory Committee and Government representatives. The committee met to make recommendations to the Food Distribution Administration and the Quartermaster Corps on ways and means of producing this quantity of egg powder in 1944, and also discussed container and machinery replacement problems affecting the industry this year.

Announcement of the proposed purchase programs by the Food Distribution Administration and Army officials gave the industry committee assurance that overall requirements in 1944 would be at least as great as actual needs for dried whole eggs in 1943. While the committee approved, in general, the purchase program proposed by the FDA, it requested that the program be operated on an announced price basis. This, committee members said, was necessary to assure procurement of the full quantity - about 185 million pounds - needed by FDA in 1944 for shipment to the allies. Food Distribution Administration representatives proposed that the purchase program be operated on an offer and acceptance basis.

Col. L. C. Webster of the Army Quartermaster Corps said that Army requirements this year would amount to about 60 million pounds. These needs are slightly greater than they were in the past year. (Other direct war needs are expected to present the total military requirements for dried whole eggs up to about 75 million pounds in 1944.) The army procurement program will start about February 1, and will continue through January 1945, with deliveries on the basis of about 5 million pounds a month. Col. Webster pointed out that the present 3-pound package used by the Army has proved satisfactory, but said that the Army purchase program this year calls for changes in production methods as a means of increasing keeping qualities of the powder. One of the changes calls for the drying of whites and yolks separately and the blending of the two powders. This would permit special treatment of the whites to reduce sugar content and improve keeping qualities. Industry representatives pointed out that all plants are not properly equipped to manufacture dried whole egg powder in this manner but there was probably sufficient capacity to supply the Army requirement.

Tom G. Stitts, Chief of the Dairy and Poultry Branch of the FDA and Government chairman of the committee, urged that the industry make every effort to manufacture the bulk of the powder needed in 1944 during the season of flush production of eggs and not to depend as heavily upon frozen eggs as it did in 1943. This would help to avoid any further congestion of the Nation's storage facilities. The FDA purchase program, he pointed out, plus military requirements, would provide for operation of drying plants for approximately 10 months in 1944.

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This program, he explained, has been arranged in regard to purchase and deliveries so that acceptance of the bulk of the powder needed can be made during the months of flush egg production. The dried egg industry this year, he said, should consider not only the present serious storage situation but civilian requirements, the frozen egg industry, the production of shell eggs, and all other factors in their buying program. The offer and acceptance method of purchase had been suggested by FDA, he explained, as a means of holding speculation in shell eggs to a minimum—a necessary move if a storage order providing for storage limitations is not to be used.

In a discussion of the seriousness of the container and package situation, FDA officials said that only 6 to 8 million new wooden egg cases would be manufactured in 1944 out of a total requirement of about 30 million cases. Since military priorities will give most of the wooden cases to the Army, the industry must count heavily on fibre cases of which at least 22 million will be needed. The industry recently was asked to report its 1944 requirements for egg cases—particularly of the fibre type — and representatives at the meeting were urged to get their reports in as speedily as possible. Although efforts are being made to standardize the fibre cases as to handles and covers, it was explained that it would not be possible to concentrate on the manufacture of any single type. In view of the overall need, at least a part of the fibre cases used in 1944 will be the 15 dozen type because existing facilities do not have adequate capacity to make the full requirement of 30-dozen size cases. Flats, fillers, and cartons for eggs can be obtained in the approximately quantities needed, but salvage of these will be necessary in order to meet the full requirement.

Officials suggested that all orders for container and packaging materials be placed with manufacturers as early as possible and that applications for fibre egg cases should be filed on WPB form 2408 and transmitted to WPB, Washington, D. C., for AA-2x rating.

A change in the FDA dried egg purchase announcement for 1944 relating to specifications of dried eggs to produce improved quality were explained.

Members of the committee who attended the meeting are: Harold Albert, principal officer, Albert and Gerber, New York, N.Y.; John T. Christian, president and general manager, Christian and Company, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pa.; John B. Collier, Jr., president and general manager, Fort Worth Poultry and Egg Company, Fort Worth, Texas; A. L. Farnham, manager, Producers Produce Company, Springfield, Mo.; Paul Kennedy, principal officer, Henningsen Brothers, Inc., New York, N.Y.; W. F. Leimert, president and general manager, Tranin Egg Products Company, Kansas City, Mo.; W. B. Loucks, president and treasurer, Wadley and Company, Inc., New York, N. Y.; J. G. Odell, manager, Frozen Egg Department, Seymour Packing Company, Topeka, Kansas; J. B. Pherigo, manager, Bowman and Company, Inc., Chicago, Ill.; John K. Teaford, Teaford, Danches and Company, St. Louis, Mo.; and Otto Wright, vice president and general manager, Davis-Cleaver Produce Company, Quincy, Illinois.

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